

CVs – the basics are essential

- Your CV needs to include contact information; education and qualifications; work experience or relevant skills to the job in question; and some references.
- Check your contact details are correct and put them at the top of the page.
- Check your spelling and grammar. Make sure your CV reads well and that it looks right when printed.
- Try and stick to two pages or less, make it concise, relevant and try not to waffle.

Stand out from the crowd

- With so many applications, it is likely that only your personal profile or summary will be read, so make it count.
- Keep it punchy, sell your skills, sell yourself, make sure the person reading it is absolutely convinced you're the right person for that role.
- Tailor your profile to the main points from the job description so you quickly show you're the right fit. A generic CV is easy to spot and rule out, tailor your CV and personal statement to the specific role.

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The harsh reality

- An average of 250+ candidates apply for each job.
- four/six get an interview.
- One gets hired.

Try to ensure that your CV and application stand out.

Remember your skills and interests

Even if you lack work experience and are applying for your first job, remember the skills you've learnt through DofE.

Communication, team working, problem solving and composure under pressure are huge attributes to potential employers so be sure to include these too.

Employers will recognise the DofE Award so these elements should be included on your CV.

Find more advice on creating the perfect CV at
[DofE.org/lifezone/applying/cv](https://www.dofe.org/lifezone/applying/cv)



Interviews – preparation is key

- Research the company, their market and the job description beforehand.
- Set up Google alerts on the company and follow their social media, it'll help you keep up to date with their latest news and you can talk about it during your interview.
- Know where you're going on the day; who you're meeting and what time you need to be there.
- Arrive early – it'll give you some time to settle your nerves and ensure you're not flustered.
- Practice interview questions with friends and family. Remember to practice WHAT to say and HOW to say it, then practice, practice, practice.
- Eat breakfast before your interview, nobody wants that awkward moment when your stomach is rumbling beyond belief in a quiet interview room.

During the interview

- Be yourself, be genuine. Take your time – many people are nervous before a job interview.
- Smile, shake hands if appropriate, introduce yourself and make a good first impression.
- Sit up straight, be professional, speak with confidence and make eye contact.
- Remember to breath... deeply... take time to think about your answers and remain calm.
- Be social. Talk about your skills, experience and background but remember the interviewer is also trying to see if you'd be a pleasant person to work with and fit in their team.

The social experiment

- The interviewer is trying to assess whether you fit into their organisation and their values, as well as



being able to work within a certain department or for a specific manager. Remember, this is as much a social evaluation as a technical one.

- Don't just repeat your CV. The interviewer wants to find out more about you, your values, principles and beliefs.
- Speaking of social media, refine yours before the interview. According to YouGov, 80% of employers check your social media before hiring. Your profile picture, your recent posts, all signs for a potential employer to see if you fit in.
- Leave a lasting impression. The interviewer will probably see 10-15 candidates for a role, so the impression you leave will be as important as the questions you answered. You want to be remembered as professional, likeable and employable. Shake hands if appropriate, say thank you and remember their name.

The awkward question

- Everyone will struggle with a question or two in the interview. It's how you react that's key.
- Don't get stressed, don't be flustered or fidget. Don't dwell on a negative point.
- Don't go off on tangents.
- Don't be afraid to say you don't know. It's better than trying to fake a response or lie.
- Try and bring the question back around to your strengths, you will have relatable skills and experience, you just need to take time, breath and think about your response.
- Remember the skills and experience you've learnt on your DofE and relate these to the job or question you're being asked. You'll be pleasantly surprised how much you've learnt.

Find more advice on interview techniques at
DofE.org/lifezone/applying



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